

Many Languages of Missouri

January 2023



Missouri Language Diversity

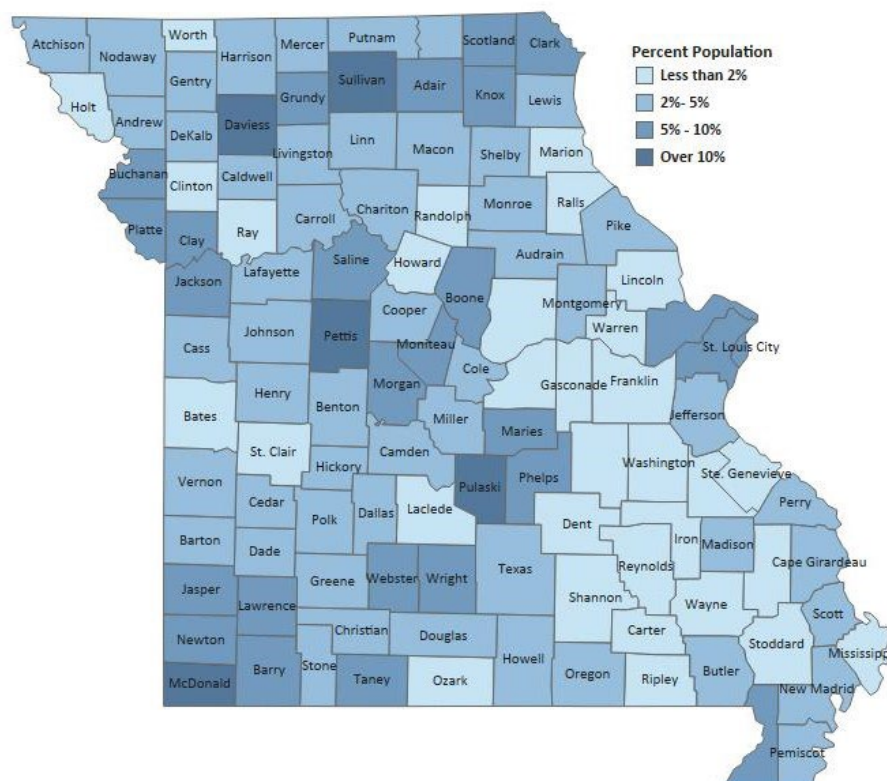
The Missouri Economic Research and Information Center (MERIC) tracks language diversity in the state to help inform the public, businesses, agencies, organizations, and other stakeholders of the unique language diversity across Missouri. The language data series also helps determine English Language Proficiency for purposes of translation requirements. This data is pulled and analyzed from the U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey five-year estimates and represents 2020 estimates (2016-2020). The American Community Survey includes a general language survey that is updated annually and a more detailed survey of over 40 different languages spoken in Missouri. The later survey has a greater time-lapse, of about five years.

Ninety-four percent of Missouri residents speak English only. The remaining six percent of residents whose primary language is something other than English can be broken down into two groups: those who are fluent in English and those that have a limited proficiency with the English language.

Counties in Missouri that have the largest percentage of population of foreign-language speakers include Sullivan (17.9%), McDonald (12.7%), Pettis (12.1%), Pulaski (11.9%), and Daviess (10.3%).

The following bar graph represents languages at a more detailed level statewide. Out of more than 40 surveyed languages, seven had 10,000 or more speakers in the state. These include

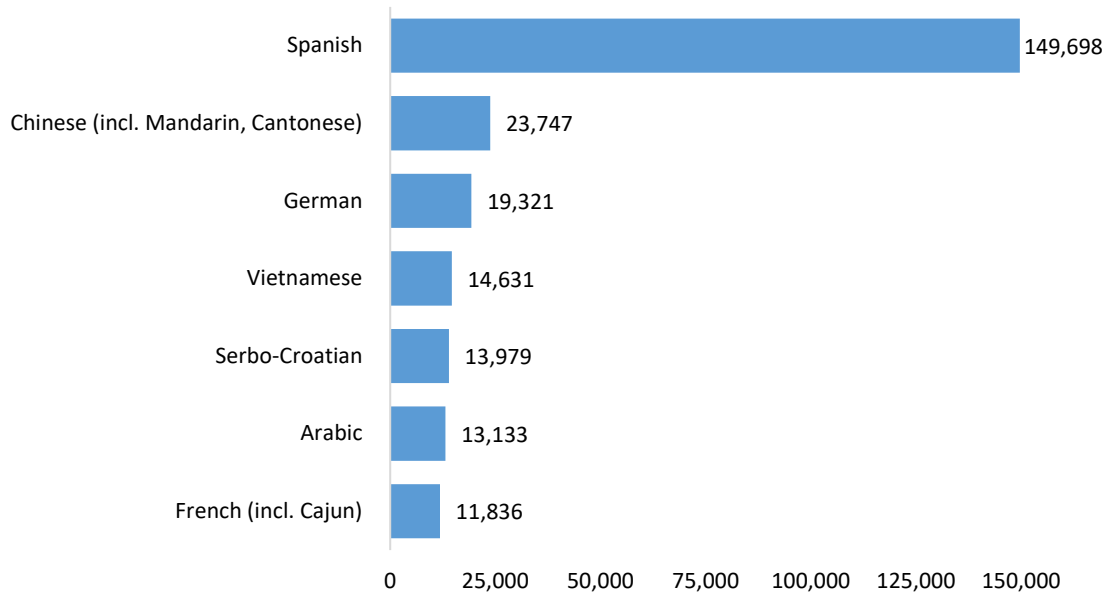
Population (5 years and older) who speak a language other than English



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2020, 5 Year Estimates

Spanish, Chinese, German, Vietnamese, Serbo-Croatian, Arabic, and French.

Languages with More Than 10,000 Speakers in Missouri



The most common language spoken in Missouri other than English is Spanish. Spanish speakers make up approximately 2.6 percent of Missouri's total population aged five years and older, or 149,698 individuals as of 2020. Sullivan, McDonald, and Saline counties have the highest portion of their population that speaks Spanish, while Jackson County has the largest number of Spanish speakers.

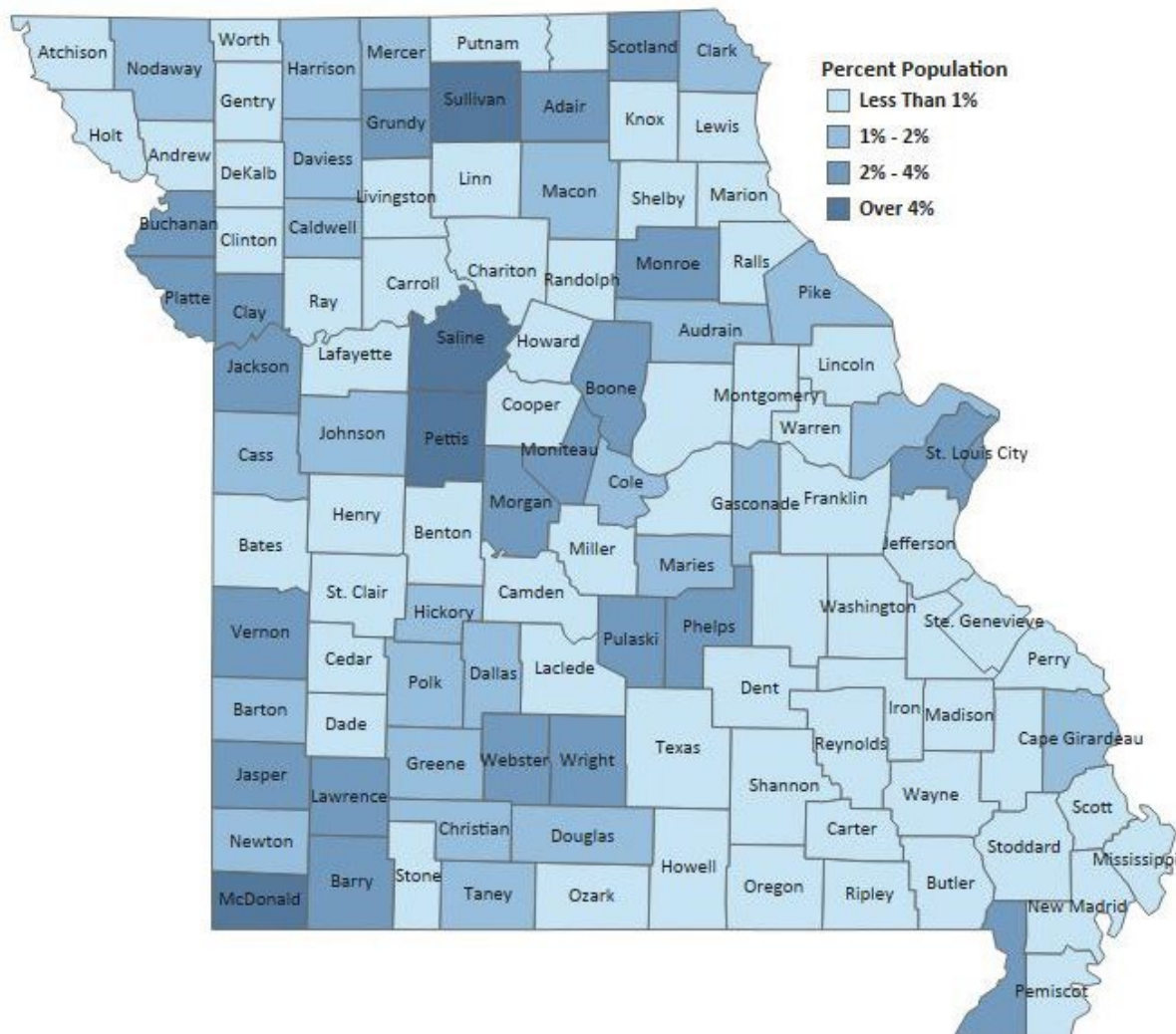
Highest Percentage of Spanish Speakers by County			
County	Population 5 years and older	Population 5 years and older who speak Spanish	Percent of Population 5 years and older who speak Spanish
Sullivan	5,745	897	15.6%
McDonald	21,183	1,849	8.7%
Saline	21,536	1,671	7.8%
Barry	33,560	2,328	6.9%
Dunklin	27,607	1,865	6.8%
Pulaski	48,929	2,972	6.1%
Lawrence	35,654	2,162	6.1%
Pettis	39,490	2,387	6.0%
Jackson	654,665	38,877	5.9%
Jasper	112,358	6,145	5.5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2020, 5 Year Estimates

Limited English Proficiency

Six percent of Missouri's population aged five and older speak a language other than English at home. Counties in Missouri with the largest percentage of population who have limited proficiency in English include Sullivan (8.4%), McDonald (6.7%), Pettis (5.0%), Saline (4.9%), and Moniteau (4.0%). For these counties the language most frequently spoken by those with limited English proficiency is Spanish.

Population (5 years and older) with limited English proficiency



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2020, 5 Year Estimates

The following table shows a breakdown of population (5 years and older) by county that speaks a language other than English or that has limited proficiency in English.

County	Population 5 years and older	Population 5 years and older who speak a language other than English	Population 5 years and older with limited English proficiency	County	Population 5 years and older	Population 5 years and older who speak a language other than English	Population 5 years and older with limited English proficiency	County	Population 5 years and older	Population 5 years and older who speak a language other than English	Population 5 years and older with limited English proficiency
Adair	23,925	5.7%	3.3%	Grund	9,181	6.8%	3.3%	Perry	18,095	4.1%	1.0%
Andrew	16,530	2.7%	0.5%	Harrison	7,885	3.3%	1.3%	Pettis	39,490	12.1%	5.0%
Atchison	4,921	2.0%	0.1%	Henry	20,593	3.3%	0.9%	Phelps	42,146	6.2%	2.4%
Audrain	23,731	4.2%	1.2%	Hickory	9,057	4.1%	1.7%	Pike	17,125	2.9%	1.2%
Barry	33,560	9.0%	3.7%	Holt	4,156	1.1%	0.0%	Platte	96,615	8.0%	2.3%
Barton	11,050	2.5%	1.0%	Howard	9,443	1.8%	0.6%	Polk	30,063	3.7%	1.2%
Bates	15,291	1.7%	0.6%	Howell	37,495	2.5%	0.7%	Pulaski	48,929	11.9%	2.6%
Benton	18,476	3.2%	0.9%	Iron	9,597	1.9%	0.5%	Putnam	4,436	2.4%	0.2%
Bollinger	11,564	1.2%	0.1%	Jackson	654,665	9.5%	3.8%	Ralls	9,687	1.0%	0.3%
Boone	169,314	8.0%	3.1%	Jasper	112,358	7.4%	3.1%	Randolph	23,285	1.9%	0.3%
Buchanan	82,342	6.1%	2.9%	Jefferson	211,690	3.1%	0.9%	Ray	21,588	1.9%	0.3%
Butler	39,884	2.1%	0.3%	Johnson	50,548	4.3%	1.3%	Reynolds	6,005	0.9%	0.0%
Caldwell	8,517	2.6%	1.9%	Knox	3,695	7.0%	0.4%	Ripley	12,679	1.3%	0.4%
Callaway	42,575	1.7%	0.7%	Laclede	33,231	1.9%	0.4%	Saline	21,536	8.6%	4.9%
Camden	43,815	3.9%	0.6%	Lafayette	30,878	2.2%	0.5%	Schuyler	4,198	4.3%	0.5%
Cape Girardeau	74,336	3.6%	1.2%	Lawrence	35,654	7.2%	3.0%	Scotland	4,517	9.0%	3.5%
Carroll	8,240	4.1%	0.4%	Lewis	9,333	3.0%	0.4%	Scott	36,020	3.2%	0.5%
Carter	5,739	0.2%	0.0%	Lincoln	53,680	1.5%	0.5%	Shannon	7,715	1.3%	0.1%
Cass	98,474	3.7%	1.1%	Linn	11,287	3.1%	0.4%	Shelby	5,617	3.3%	0.2%
Cedar	13,189	2.3%	0.3%	Livingston	14,140	2.7%	0.7%	St. Charles	375,044	5.5%	1.6%
Chariton	6,989	2.4%	0.4%	Macon	14,296	2.9%	1.3%	St. Clair	8,947	1.0%	0.2%
Christian	81,860	3.6%	1.5%	Madison	11,504	2.5%	0.9%	St. Francois	62,981	1.7%	0.4%
Clark	6,395	6.1%	1.8%	Maries	8,394	5.1%	2.0%	St. Louis	937,629	9.5%	3.0%
Clay	230,568	7.0%	2.5%	Marion	26,773	1.0%	0.2%	St. Louis City	285,659	9.7%	3.6%
Clinton	19,423	1.9%	0.3%	McDonald	21,183	12.7%	6.7%	Ste. Genevieve	16,973	1.9%	0.7%
Cole	72,087	3.8%	1.5%	Mercer	3,390	3.4%	1.4%	Stoddard	27,608	1.1%	0.2%
Cooper	16,509	2.6%	0.6%	Miller	23,749	3.2%	0.5%	Stone	30,613	2.1%	0.4%
Crawford	22,620	2.0%	0.7%	Mississippi	12,734	1.9%	0.9%	Sullivan	5,745	17.9%	8.4%
Dade	7,211	2.6%	0.2%	Moniteau	14,828	9.1%	4.0%	Taney	52,538	5.8%	1.5%
Dallas	15,743	4.4%	1.6%	Monroe	8,174	4.5%	2.0%	Texas	24,092	3.6%	0.6%
Daviess	7,737	10.3%	1.8%	Montgomery	10,722	3.1%	0.8%	Vernon	19,267	4.0%	2.6%
DeKalb	11,304	2.1%	0.1%	Morgan	19,072	8.7%	2.9%	Warren	32,912	1.7%	0.7%
Dent	14,647	1.7%	0.2%	New Madrid	16,162	2.8%	0.2%	Washington	23,372	1.6%	0.2%
Douglas	12,551	2.1%	1.7%	Newton	54,657	5.2%	2.0%	Wayne	12,424	1.5%	0.2%
Dunklin	27,607	7.7%	2.2%	Nodaway	21,143	2.7%	1.1%	Webster	36,208	7.1%	3.7%
Franklin	97,483	1.9%	0.5%	Oregon	9,958	2.1%	0.1%	Worth	1,896	0.8%	0.1%
Gasconade	13,906	1.9%	1.0%	Osage	12,858	1.2%	0.4%	Wright	16,978	5.6%	2.9%
Gentry	6,110	4.1%	0.9%	Ozark	8,750	1.7%	0.8%				
Greene	274,222	4.9%	1.7%	Pemiscot	15,124	3.8%	0.7%	Total Statewide	5,753,114	6.3%	2.1%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2020, 5 Year Estimates

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